

NHSC

A.L.E.R.T.

Ambassador Leadership Education Resources & Training



Our monthly e-mail message has a new look!

We are rolling out an exciting new look for the NHSC monthly e-mail. To provide you with the tools to assist you in cultivating students for careers in primary care for the underserved, A.L.E.R.T. will continue to bring you important information on primary care practice and training opportunities, NHSC announcements, and helpful resources. The newsletters will be placed on the NHSC Web site for easy, future reference.

Partnership with the Area Health Education Centers

On May 8, 2003, Michelle Corbin, the NHSC Ambassador Program Manager, attended the AHEC meeting in Washington, D.C. Strategies and ideas were developed for ways in which the NHSC and the AHECs can work more closely on the NHSC On-Campus Ambassador Program. The NHSC looks forward to future collaborations with the AHECs on this and other initiatives to improve the health of the Nation's underserved.

"National Mental Health Month" Draws Attention to Interdisciplinary Practice – A Core NHSC Philosophy

In celebration of National Mental Health month, the NHSC proudly recognizes the strong presence of mental and behavioral health professionals in the NHSC and the contributions these clinicians make to improve the health of underserved communities nationwide. We salute their commitment, and are actively recruiting for hundreds of mental health job openings in underserved areas. Currently, 10.8% of NHSC clinicians are mental and behavioral health professionals.

In addition to this recognition, we encourage you to advise your students of the many people who turn to NHSC primary care clinicians for mental health services, including help with depression or somatic symptoms. Mental health clinicians may be particularly scarce in underserved areas. New research stresses that, because of the implications for safe practice, a variety of providers, including midwives, OB/GYNs, and dentists need to become more skilled in recognizing clients' mental health needs, as well as referring and adapting services for them.

As you counsel your students for careers in primary care to the underserved, we would like Ambassadors to be aware of an excellent tool developed by The MacArthur Foundation Initiative on Depression and Primary Care. This toolkit was developed for physicians, but is applicable for all teaching and primary care settings and can be downloaded and edited to fit your needs. Visit www.depression-primarycare.org and click on "Clinician Resources." The toolkit provides diagnostic, treatment, management and referral guidelines, and sample documentation.

Are Your Graduates Looking for Jobs?

The NHSC maintains a list of thousands of job opportunities in underserved communities across the country. All licensed health professionals can apply for these jobs, which are listed on our Web site. Please let your students know early in their training about the NHSC Opportunities List and the available jobs. The NHSC has over 3000 vacancies to fill, and we need clinicians dedicated to serving the underserved.

http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/opportunities_list/

Good News: Increase in the NHSC Scholar Stipend

There has been a cost of living increase in the NHSC Scholar stipend, effective July 1, 2003. Scholars will receive monthly payments of \$1098 for the contract year July 1-June 30, or until graduation. Students beginning in the program often do not receive their first payment until October. That payment includes funds retroactive to July 1 (July through October). Your students can call the NHSC at 1-800-793-1547 for additional information. Benefits are detailed on page eight of the Scholarship Application Bulletin.

<http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/applications/2003ScholarBulletin.pdf>

Ambassador Recruitment:

The NHSC is working with various groups including the AHECs, American Dental Hygienist Association, American Association of Medical Colleges, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, and the American College of Nurse-Midwives to recruit more Ambassadors. Recently, the Tennessee Primary Care Association's SEARCH Program announced a partnership with the NHSC Ambassador program, with a focus on recruiting Ambassadors. Let us know if you have recruitment suggestions.

Ambassadors in Action: We want to hear from you.

On the Ambassador Web site, we will be developing a place to profile your activities in mentoring students for careers in primary care, serving the underserved. Please send us your story so we can let other Ambassadors know what you are doing. We will also include this information in A.L.E.R.T. Please e-mail us at NHSCAmbassador@matthewsgroup.com.

Ambassador Web Site:

The NHSC has added information and resources to your Ambassador Web site. Some recent additions include strategies to mentor nurse practitioner students for rural and urban primary care settings in underserved areas. Please visit the Web site at <http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/ambassadors> and let us know your thoughts.